

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 16 are pending. Claims 3, 10 - 13, and 16 have been allowed, and claims 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, and 14 have been amended above.

Claim 8 stands objected to in that "the image rotator" lacks antecedent basis. Claim 8 has been amended above so as to instead recited "an image rotator". Therefore, it is requested that the objection to claim 8 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minami (U.S. Patent No. 4,801,197) in view of Howes (U.S. Patent No. 5,264,928). Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of claims 1 and 2 having been amended, above. As amended, claims 1 and 2 require that there be "at least one lens that is located between the connecting part and the beam splitter and that serves to form said intermediate images". Minami states, in column 6, line 15, that the intermediate image is formed near the prism 25, and then is reflected twice by the prism before the image light is deflected by the mirror 26. This means that no intermediate image is formed in the light paths following the mirror 26 (which has a similar function as a beam splitter). On the other hand, Howes is silent regarding the position of the intermediate image. However, in view of the shortness of the optical paths following the beam splitter 16, it is highly unlikely that intermediate images are formed in the light paths following the beam splitter. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the structure of Howes would **not** suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art to form intermediate images as is now claimed. Therefore, unless more pertinent prior art is found, it is believed that claims 1 and 2 should now be allowable, on the basis that neither Minami or Howes suggests the position of the intermediate image as is now claimed in amended claims 1 and 2.

Claims 4 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C.. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minami in view of Howes as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Feinbloom (U.S. Patent No. 4,143,938). Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of the amendment, above, of base claim 1, from which claims 4 and 5 depend. Feinbloom in no way makes up for the deficiency of Minami and Howes in making obvious the invention defined by amended claim 1, for the reasons as

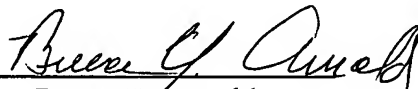
stated in the above paragraph.

Claims 6 - 9, 14 and 15 stand objected to for being dependent on a rejected base claim, but have been indicated as otherwise allowable if rewritten in proper form. Accordingly, each of claims 6, 8, 9 and 14 has been amended so as to be in independent form, and so as to included all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, it is believed that claims 6 - 9 14 and 15, should now be allowable.

Having amended claims 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, and 14 so as to overcome the rejections and objections of record, it is believed that claims 1 - 16 should now be allowable. Thus, an early Notice of Allowability is earnestly solicited. Attached is a check in the amount of \$800.00 for the fee for four independent claims in excess of 3 independent claims. Please charge any additional fee(s), or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 01-2509.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Check in the Amount of \$800.00